

October 2015



Ranger Roundup

John Pierson, Reserve District Ranger

Fall is upon us. For me, the month of October is a time of reflection on our accomplishments over the past year. Employees have been working diligently to make this part of the Gila a place to relax and enjoy the wonders that occur on the unit, as well as providing goods and services to our local communities. This is one of our busiest seasons with folks from all over the country pursuing a Gila trophy elk, coming to see fall colors in the high country, or enjoying the last warm period known as the "Indian Summer" with friends and family.

Opportunities that one may enjoy on the district include visiting Snow Lake and Willow Creek Campgrounds. Fishing has been good and as you drive through the country, you will enjoy the surreal views across this remote landscape. Willow Creek Campground, which sits alongside this small tributary of the Middle Fork of the Gila River, provides for a remote experience and has Gila trout, which is a native trout. Willow Creek is one of the few places outside of wilderness where one can catch this native trout of New Mexico. Please check our website to learn more about other recreational opportunities on the Reserve Ranger District <http://www.fs.usda.gov/activity/gila/recreation/camping-cabins/?recid=1958&actid=29>

You can expect to see us out in the woods working on projects such as prescribed burning within the Sheep Basin area this fall. This project is being accomplished with our partners, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and includes approximately 2,500 acres to reduce fuels and improve wildlife habitat. Also, there will be several areas across the district that we will be conducting pile burning. One area will be along Highway 12 and 180 junctions. Fall burning provides us with the opportunity to treat areas under favorable weather conditions.

If you are traveling along Forest Road 141 from Reserve to Sheep Basin and beyond, please drive with caution as we have five active timber sales in progress east of Sheep Basin. We have been working successfully to provide forest products to the local industry for the past three years with the treatment of approximately 4,566 acres which has produced over 13 million board feet.

Remember to contact us at the Reserve Ranger District for updated information on travel conditions and recreation opportunities. While visiting, make sure that you are prepared with the appropriate gear and let someone know your itinerary in case of an emergency. As always, we are here to serve and make your visit a pleasurable experience. Please enjoy your Gila National Forest and let us know how we are doing.



View from Negrito Lookout



Prescribed Fire



T Bar Grasslands